

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DLOS-03 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OES-03 COA-01 EB-07 COME-00 INT-05

OMB-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-05 /093 W
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R 241337Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7679

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMCONSUL ADANA

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL

AMCONSUL IZMIR

EUCOM

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 0699

EO 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TU, GR

SUBJECT: TURKISH POLICY IN THE AEGEAN

REF: A) ANKARA 473; B) ANKARA 361; C) ANKARA 339

1. ON JANUARY 23 EMBASSY OFFICER CALLED ON GUNALTAY SIBAY, FOREIGN MINISTRY'S PRINCIPAL ACTION OFFICER FOR MARITIME AFFAIRS, FOR DISCUSSION OF AEGEAN ISSUES. IN RESPONSE TO EMBOFF'S OBSERVATION THAT AEGEAN QUESTION HAD REAPPEARED RATHER SUDDENLY AS PROMINENT PUBLIC ISSUE AFTER REMAINING QUIET SEVERAL MONTHS, SIBAY SAID THAT ACCORDING TO THE BRUSSELS AGREEMENT BETWEEN TURKISH AND GREEK FONMINISTERS, BOTH SIDES WERE SUPPOSED TO REFRAIN FROM "AGGRAVATING" THE AEGEAN SITUATION. WHILE THE TURKS FELT THEY WERE OBSERVING THE AGREEMENT, THE JANUARY 9 STATEMENT BY GREEK DEFMIN AVEROFF HAD UPSET THE APPLE CART.

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AS A RESULT, PUBLIC PRESSURE IN TURKEY

HAD INCREASED TO THE POINT THAT THE IRMAK GOVERNMENT (AND PARTICULARLY THE FOREIGN MINISTRY) FELT CONSTRAINED TO "DO SOMETHING" IN ORDER TO COUNTER ALLEGATIONS THAT IT WAS NEGLECTING VITAL NATIONAL INTERESTS IN THE AEGEAN. SIBAY EMPHASIZED THAT THE STATEMENT OF FORMER PRIMIN BULENT ECEVIT (REF C) WAS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING TO THE PRESSURE ON THE IRMAK GOVERNMENT TO PURSUE A MORE ACTIVE POLICY.

2. WHILE SIBAY REITERATED ESTABLISHED GOT POSITIONS REGARDING VITAL NATURE OF TURKISH INTERESTS IN THE AEGEAN AND "NO PACKAGE DEAL" INVOLVING THE AEGEAN AND CYPRUS, HE ALSO MADE FOLLOWING KEY POINTS:

A. GOT HAS GIVEN "DISCREET SIGNALS" TO ATHENS REGARDING THE AEGEAN AND IS AWAITING A RESPONSE (SIBAY DECLINED TO ELABORATE ON THE "SIGNALS");

B. "LONGVA" RESEARCH VESSEL HAS SET SAIL FOR AEGEAN, BUT SIBAY WOULD NOT RPT NOT SAY WHETHER OR NOT THE VESSEL WOULD CONDUCT OPERATIONS IN DISPUTED AREA; HOWEVER, HE SAID TURKEY DID NOT RPT NOT WANT TO BE "PROVOCATIVE";

C. PRIOR TO FALL OF GREEK JUNTA LAST SUMMER, THERE WAS AN EXCHANGE OF LETTERS BETWEEN GREEK AND TURKISH CHIEFS OF STAFF, IN WHICH THE GOT AGAIN PROPOSED THAT THE AEGEAN BE TURNED INTO AN "AREA OF COOPERATION"; SIBAY ALSO REFERRED TO PRIMIN IRMAK'S OFFER OF "JOINT PROSPECTING" IN THE AEGEAN (REF B).

3. COMMENT: IN THE PAST, SIBAY HAD BEEN A KNOWLEDGEABLE AND INFORMATIVE SOURCE REGARDING AEGEAN AND LAW-OF-SEA AFFAIRS. DESPITE RELATIVELY LOW RANK, HE SEEMS WELL REGARDED WITHIN FOREIGN MINISTRY (HE WAS HURRIEDLY SUMMONED FROM OUR DISCUSSION TO A MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER).
MACOMBER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, LAW OF THE SEA, AEGEAN SEA, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975ANKARA00699
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750027-0649
From: ANKARA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750124/aaaaavft.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 ANKARA 473, 75 ANKARA 361, 75 ANKARA 339
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <17 SEP 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TURKISH POLICY IN THE AEGEAN
TAGS: PFOR, TU, GR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006